

BOSTON MAIN STREETS Design Assistance

STOREFRONT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Claire Ann's, South Boston

before



after



Boston Main Street programs and the city's 19 local Main Street districts strive to enrich and preserve the unique character of Boston's commercial centers. *Boston Main Streets Design Assistance* enables local Main Street districts to improve the design and physical appearance of their district's buildings, streets, and sidewalks. Design improvements contribute to community economic restructuring and revitalization efforts.

La Sultana, East Boston

before

after



The *Storefront Improvement Program* focuses specifically on the exterior physical appearance of neighborhood businesses. The Program aims to improve the design and physical appearance of buildings by providing neighborhood business owners with professional architectural advice. Consequently, each local Main Street district and their businesses have the opportunity to improve their businesses as well as to help enhance the overall image and economic conditions for all within their particular community.

Good design decisions are strong foundations for good business and can be cost-effective investments when properly planned. Business and property owners who participate in the *Storefront Improvement Program* also are eligible for grants on a reimbursement basis to help defer the cost of improvements.

How does the *Storefront Improvement Program* Work?

Boston Main Street managers and local business owners develop a close relationship based on the business owner's specific concerns and local Main Street district's initiatives to ensure the health of the community. The *Storefront Improvement Program* often becomes a catalyst for other district activities, including streetscape, sidewalk, traffic flow, and crime watch improvements and on-going local Main Street district promotion activities.

Generally, soon after a commercial district is awarded the Main Street designation, the *Storefront Improvement Program* is launched through a promotional campaign aimed at local businesses and building owners. *Storefront Improvement Program* promotions continue in various formats throughout the life of the Main Street program.

Step 1. To apply to the *Storefront Improvement Program*, a neighborhood business or property owner contacts the local Main Street manager to receive a preliminary application.

Step 2. The local Main Street manager submits the preliminary application to the local Main Street Design Committee.

Step 3. Upon approval of funding and design assistance, an architect conducts an on-site meeting with the business owner and produces a conceptual design proposal and description of the proposed storefront improvement.

Step 4. Using the conceptual design proposal and description as a guide, the business owner hires a contractor to complete the improvement project.

For More Information

Call your local Main Streets district [*link to list of districts*] to learn more about local eligibility requirements, design guidelines, and the application process.

For additional general information about Boston Main Streets, contact:

Boston Main Streets

26 Court Street

Boston, MA 02108

617.635.2000 *tel*

617.635.0282 *fax*

For a complete listing of Boston Main Street businesses click on to BostonMainStreets.com.

For information about additional financial and technical assistance resources available to entrepreneurs, small business owners, and business owners expanding or relocating in Boston click on to CityofBoston.com/business.